



Voice <sup>of the</sup>  
Martyrs

PERSECUTION  
& PRAYER  
ALERT

## Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, October 17, 2024

*"May God be gracious to us  
and bless us and make His face  
to shine upon us, that Your way  
may be known on earth, Your  
saving power among all nations."*

~ Psalm 67:1-2 ESV

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### PAKISTAN: Medical Care Denied to Elderly Christian

Sources: International Christian Concern, AsiaNews

On October 1st, Yousaf Masih Gill took his gravely ill father to the Civil Hospital in Sahiwal, Punjab, for urgent medical treatment. Seeking a doctor to care for his father, Yousaf eventually located the hospital staff, who were playing a game together. Finally, one of the physicians examined the elderly man. However, the doctor told Yousaf, "If I had known earlier that you are a Christian, I would not have touched your father."

When it was determined that the elderly believer required surgery, the doctor refused to operate on him. In response, Yousaf's brother, Babu Nadeem, organized a protest outside the hospital, together with dozens of others who heard about the situation. "We have witnessed very disappointing behaviour [from] our doctors, just because we are Christians," Babu asserted.

The hospital medical officer visited the distressed family two days after the incident. Apologizing for the unprofessional behaviour of the doctors, the officer assured the family that the necessary surgery would take place in the next few days. No further updates are available at the time of publishing this report.

Unfortunately, discrimination against religious minorities is common in Pakistan. They are typically forced to work long hours in oppressive jobs and frequently denied services routinely provided to Muslim citizens. For more information on the injustices and suffering facing our Christian family in Pakistan, go to [www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm).

*Please pray for the full recovery of this elderly Christian believer, asking our Heavenly Father to provide him the necessary medical treatment, along with greatly needed physical and emotional healing. May God's peace also rest on Yousaf, Babu, and the other members of their family who have been affected by this traumatic incident. Pray that the hospital staff will demonstrate more consideration towards our Pakistani brothers and sisters in Christ, and that positive changes will be made so future patients – regardless of their religious affiliations – will be treated with equality, respect and dignity.*

## REPORT UPDATES

### **MALAYSIA: Latest News on Pastor Raymond Koh**

Sources: Mission Network News, Open Doors UK, International Christian Concern, Free Malaysia Today, Malaymail

On February 13th, 2017, Pastor Raymond Koh was kidnapped in broad daylight. More than seven years later, his wife Susanna continues to search tirelessly for answers regarding her husband's disappearance. As part of this process, she filed a lawsuit in 2020 against the Malaysian government for negligence.

To show that Pastor Raymond's disappearance was being investigated, the government formed a task force to allegedly look into the incident. However, the government refused to release the results of the investigation, claiming that the files contained official secrets. The judge in Susanna's court case disagreed with these claims, and therefore ordered that a copy of the results be released to the missing pastor's wife. However, when Susanna received the report, the document was covered with watermarks that distorted the photographs and made much of the text unreadable.

Lawyers returned to the judge to request an unredacted copy. On September 25th, officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs announced that they would comply and release the document without any obstructive watermarks. At last report, Susanna has received the unaltered version. Neither she nor her lawyers have commented on the contents.

One of the challenges concerning the missing pastor's case is that the report was composed by a task force of the government. The government also controls the special branch of police who had been monitoring Pastor Raymond prior to his disappearance. Susanna believes that these police officers were responsible for her husband's abduction. While addressing this situation, Todd Nettleton from the Voice of the Martyrs USA asked a pertinent question: "How much truth is going to be in this report?"

Susanna's lawsuit against the government remains ongoing. The next court hearing is scheduled to take place on October 21st. For more details on Pastor Raymond's case, see VOMC's series of report updates at [www.vomcanada.com/tagged-items/raymond-koh.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/tagged-items/raymond-koh.htm).

*As this arduous court process continues to unfold, pray that the truth about Pastor Raymond's disappearance will be revealed. Prayerfully uphold Susanna and the rest of her family as they deal with this extended time of uncertainty, asking the Lord to sustain them with His abounding peace, love, strength and hope. In the midst of the many challenges facing Christians throughout*

*Malaysia, may all those who have made the courageous decision to follow Jesus receive ongoing encouragement, fortitude and wisdom.*

### **MEXICO: Displaced Christians Allowed to Return Home**

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Church in Chains

On April 26th, 151 members of the Great Commission Baptist Church from two villages in Hidalgo State were forced from their homes because of their belief in Christianity. These believers have experienced years of tension because of their refusal to participate in local religious festivals involving their villages' ancient tribal rituals, drunkenness and debauchery. Prior to the forced displacement, hostile community members physically attacked several of the believers, turned off the power to their homes, banned their Christian children from attending school, and committed many other incidents of intimidation and harassment. (For further details, see [www.vomcanada.com/mx-2024-05-16.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/mx-2024-05-16.htm).)

Originally, the local leaders agreed to allow all but three Christian families to return to the area. However, those who were granted permission to return were still to be subjected to fines, in addition to the previously applied severe restrictions. (See [www.vomcanada.com/mx-2024-05-23.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/mx-2024-05-23.htm) for a previously published report.) Unable to accept this proposal, the displaced Christians found refuge in a sports complex in Huejutla de los Reyes, where they had to rely on local churches for food and use river water for drinking and bathing. During this time, many of the exiled believers, especially children and the elderly, developed waterborne illnesses and infections.

Thankfully, a new municipal government took office in September and made this case a priority, ensuring that the rights of the displaced church members were upheld. After reaching an agreement with the Christians, electricity and water services were reconnected to their homes. The believers have been given a set time to examine their properties and will be granted access to state aid for any necessary repairs. In return, members of the church have agreed to contribute financially to community funds and allow all cases involving the criminal investigations of those responsible for the initial forced displacement to be closed.

Speaking of the ordeal experienced by these believers, Anna Lee Stangl from Christian Solidarity Worldwide stated that this agreement "serves as an example of what can be achieved, in terms of protecting freedom of religion or belief and upholding Mexican law, when there is political will and an investment of time and other resources on the part of the government."

*Praise God for the collaborative efforts made by those representing all levels of governance in achieving this recent agreement. Pray that it will be implemented as promised, without any delays or opposition, so that these followers of Jesus can resume their lives and ministries. May the Lord soften the hearts of all those who oppose the Gospel message in these two Mexican communities, bringing about greater acceptance and understanding, so that our family in Christ will be able to practise their faith without fear of further harassment.*

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